The Diocese of Colorado Springs
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Office of the Bishop
Most Rev. Richard C. Hanifen
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MEMORANDUM

TO PRIESTS, DEACONS, PARISH DIRECTORS AND STAFFS

FROM BISHOP HANIFEN

RE PETITIONS CIRCULATED NEAR CHURCHES

DATE JANUARY 15, 1992

Several parishes have asked for some sense of direction from my office regarding the petition effort being undertaken by those favoring legislation which would preclude any future attempt to grant minority status to homosexual persons.

I am enclosing, first of all, a copy of my Thinking Out Loud Column dated May, 1991 which deals with the subject of the Church's position on the question of appropriate concern for our brothers and sisters of homosexual orientation.

In view of the Church's teaching regarding the morality of homosexual acts, it is clear that any legislation favoring such activity or forcing its acceptance as a way of life would be opposed by the Church.

In the case of the legislation now being considered, however, there seems to be an effort to avoid any treatment of homosexual persons as a minority in society. As I understand it, minority status depends largely upon the lack of choice in being a member of a group in danger of being mistreated by the majority in the society. It seems to me that the present legislation being considered presupposes that homosexual persons are exercising a choice to belong to such a group and are therefore excluded from minority status in the law. This supposition, I believe, is not substantiated and therefore ought not be the basis for legislation.

This is a personal conclusion I have drawn and should not be taken as a directive to forbid the presentation of petitions around our churches. It is, however, something our people might want to consider before signing such a petition for legislation.